

**Minutes of the Executive Committee**  
**Monday, March 13, 2006**

Chair Dwyer called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. and led the committee in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Present:** County Board Supervisors Jim Dwyer (Chair), Duane Paulson, Walter Kolb, Dick Manke, Bill Mitchell. **Absent:** Supervisors Duane Stamsta and Pat Haukohl.

**Also Present:** Chief of Staff Lee Esler, Office Services Coordinator Windy Jicha, Internal Audit Manager Lori Schubert, Land Information Systems Manager Don Dittmar, Waukesha Freeman Reporter Larry Silver, Legislative Policy Advisor Mark Mader, Legislative Policy Advisor Dave Krahn, Supervisor Joe Marchese, Milwaukee Journal Sentinel Scott Williams, Alicia Silva, Christine Luftner, Troy Fullerton.

**Correspondence**

Dwyer distributed and reviewed the list of correspondence. He said Supervisors should request copies of the listed items from Jicha.

**Approve the Minutes of February 20, 2006**

MOTION: Mitchell moved, Manke second, to approve the minutes of February 20, 2006. Motion carried 5-0.

**Discuss and Consider 160-A-029: Appointment of Holly Roge to the Federated Library Board**

MOTION: Mitchell moved, Kolb second, to approve Appointment 160-A-029. Motion carried 5-0.

**Committee Reports by Committee Chairs for the Following Meetings:**

March 7, 2006 – Personnel – Paulson said the committee had a preliminary discussion on establishing elected officials' salaries. Supervisor Cummings requested the committee eliminate performance awards but the committee did not care to change the current system. The committee also discussed downsizing the county board.

March 7, 2006 – Land Use, Parks and Environment– Kolb explained the intricacies of Ordinance 160-O-123.

March 9, 2006 – Public Works – Manke said the committee heard reports on the courts tower and Waukesha County 2005 mass transit routes. The committee considered an ordinance for the improvement of CTH K and a two-year extension of contract with Curative Care Network for paratransit services parallel to Route 901.

March 3, 2006 – Judiciary and Law Enforcement – Mitchell said the committee heard reports on the Community Transition Program and promotion of the Dispatch Center to non-participating communities. The committee discussed downsizing the board.

**Future Agenda Item**

- Discussion of a Waukesha west bypass
- Discussion on cost sharing of highways as relative to capital projects.

**Discuss and Consider the Scope of the End User Technology Fund Audit**

Schubert explained the background of the End User Technology Fund (EUTF) as outlined in a memo received by the committee dated March 8, 2006. The scope of the EUTF audit will be to perform an operational audit of the EUTF including analysis of the costs included in the fund and the method of distributing costs to the user departments. Schubert anticipates it will take three months to complete this audit. Dwyer asked Schubert to look into how departments in a levy freeze situation will continue to pay these costs.

MOTION: Paulson moved, Kolb second, to approve the scope of the EUTF audit. Motion carried: 5-0.

### **Preliminary Discussion of Survey on County Board Size and Structure in the United States**

Dwyer said he spent a considerable amount of time at the NACO conference talking to people from other counties about board size and operations. He learned the following from his research:

- Many boards in the U.S. have three members and have found this size board has many problems.
- Many counties have full time commissioners that make at least six figures per year.
- Staff sizes vary greatly.
- The majority of county elections are partisan with commissioners running large and expensive campaigns.
- The majority of counties hires an administrator and don't have a county executive.
- Ninety percent if not more of counties have four-year terms with term limits. Wisconsin doesn't have term limits and according to the state statutes, terms have to be two-years.

Dwyer said boards are run differently everywhere so it is hard to evaluate operations by looking at statistics. Illinois has larger boards but they are run a totally different than Wisconsin boards. California's equivalent to WCA is sending him statistics on California counties of similar size to Wisconsin. He's not sure we will be able to investigate board options thoroughly and respond according to the Taxpayers' League time frame.

Dwyer said the public needs to understand what is going on. They don't know what the county board does. Forty percent of the county's budget is controlled by the state. The state legislators passed the law to allow board downsizing but didn't discuss downsizing the state. If the board is downsized to 11 members, supervisors would be full time and we would lose a huge cross section of supervisors who would not be able to commit to a full time position. We would also lose diversity. It has been suggested we hold night meetings like school districts and municipalities. Night meetings would create conflict for those supervisors who serve both the county and municipalities. It would also create staffing conflicts because staff would need to flex their hours to attend night meetings and would not be as available to serve the public.

Kolb said he's against what the Taxpayers League is doing and thinks it's showboating. It is important to bring all aspects to the table. Milwaukee County downsized to 19 supervisors and costs have increased significantly. Citizens need to be educated on what will happen when the board is downsized. If he has to put in more time, he won't be able to serve as a supervisor. A citizen government works because of all the different types of expertise supervisors bring.

Manke said he doesn't know what will be achieved by downsizing. We're not going to save money by downsizing. If the board is downsized to 11 or smaller then we should investigate getting rid of the county executive's office. The board has held night meetings in the past but the attendance was poor. People come to meetings according to what issues are presented.

Paulson said if the board is reduced to 25 members, the number of people a supervisor represents increases and campaigning becomes more difficult. If the board is reduced to 19 members, candidates will need groups to help them run for office and they will need campaign funds. He does all his campaigning now on his own. Do you want to have legislators who need to raise money? If we go to less than 25 members, we should just reduce the board to five and have committees of the whole. How do we get our message out there without it looking like we're trying to protect our jobs? He's proud of the work the board has done without a sales tax while retaining a AAA bond rating. He would like to see a model of how the board would operate with 11, 19 and 25 members and will there be a county executive? He asked the Freeman reporter if he had a copy the study showing how larger boards cost less money. He hasn't seen anything in the paper about it. The paper doesn't report on this important data.

Dwyer said in one of the redistricting maps, a district in the southwest part of the county is 90 square miles. It is hard to represent an area that big. We are county supervisors and the majority of the issues we decide on are county wide. The will of the people is the law of the land. A lot of people didn't know how much time supervisors put into this job. Attendance isn't as good as it should be. Some people do not attend meetings on a regular basis. What will happen with a smaller board?

Krahn distributed a chart containing information he found on the Internet for 30 boards in AAA rated counties and gave the following statistics to the committee:

- The counties are not necessarily equal in size.
- Commissioner salary information was not available Online.
- Most counties have five to nine members that serve four-year terms.
- Approximately 60 to 70% have appointed administrators rather than elected executives.
- There is a wide range in the number of board staff sizes. Smaller boards don't necessarily have smaller staffs.
- Some counties have elections at large, some by district and some have a combination of both.

Esler gave an extensive history of county government in Wisconsin. He explained that in 1965 the Waukesha County board went from 74 to 35 members when the county lost a lawsuit brought against it. The case was based on the 1961 federal ruling of Baker versus Carr and changed county board representation so people were represented not districts. The outcome of the lawsuit changed the state statutes to require board sizes to be determined by county size and created ranges for board sizes. Wisconsin counties downsized in 1965 to levels below the statute maximums. Esler said from researching boards throughout the U.S. it is easy to see there are many different ways to operate.

Mitchell asked is it legal for us to vote for a five-member board without a county executive? Esler said the county executive could only be abolished by referendum. Paulson asked could we go to a five-member board? Esler said we could not go to a five-member board unless the state constitution was changed. Paulson asked if the state statutes address five versus 11 member boards? Esler said no. Dwyer told the committee he would invite Corporation Counsel Farley to the next meeting to discuss the legal issues related to board downsizing.

#### **Update on National Association of Counties Legislative Conference March 5 – 8, 2006**

Dwyer said his chief objective at the conference was to do research on board sizes. Dwyer talked about the sessions and meetings he attended at the conference and shared with the committee handouts he picked up. Dwyer and Krahn visited the offices on the hill to talk about issues important to Waukesha County.

Krahn distributed and reviewed a handout titled 2005 State Legislation dated March 13, 2006. Krahn briefly reviewed the following bills: AB 15, AB 41, AB 129, AB 152, AB 299, AB 509, AB 536, AB 538, AB 596, AB 620, AB 680, AB 713, AB 760, AB 871, AB 1038, SB 5, SB 272, AB 273, SB 352, SB 583 and SB 652.

MOTION: Mitchell moved, Paulson second, to adjourn the meeting at 11:31 a.m. Motion carried 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Walter L. Kolb  
Secretary